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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

IN PROPHECY NO. 3.

THE Old Testament closes with the ever memorable words, "Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." In the New Testament the quotation, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee," is amongst the first records. In order, therefore, to comprehend clearly the character of the institution inaugurated by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, it is neeessary to carefully examine.

THE MISSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

We are told that, "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judah, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia, and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. They had no child, and while Zacharias executed the Priest's office

before God in the order of his course, there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the Altar of incense, and said, Fear not Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy, and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine no strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mothers womb. And many of the children of Israel, shall he turn to the Lord his God. And he shall go before him in the Spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Zacharias said unto the angel, whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man and my wife well stricken in years. The angel, said to him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and thou shalt be dumb and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. When Zacharias came out he could not speak, and he departed to his own home." Six months afterwards, at the salutation of her cousin Mary, "the babe leaped in her womb," and when, "Elizabeth's full time came that, she should be delivered, she brought forth a son." When her kindred collected to rejoice with her, and to witness his circumcision, they named the child, Zacharias, after his father. But his mother said, "he shall be called John." Zacharias. who had remained dumb from his conception, "wrote, his name is John, and his mouth was opened, his tongue was loosed and he praised God."

"And Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, "And thou child shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways. To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins. And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel." Lu. 1; 5-80. Chrysostum and Jerome thought that John was brought up in the wilderness. The fact of eating locusts and wild honey, with the habit of clothing himself, with a rough garment, of Camels hair, would seem to afford some foundation for the conclusion.

When we reflect that, from his birth, he was to be filled with the Spirit, and to be regarded as a prophet, we have the conclusion

somewhat strengthened. When about thirty years old—the age at which the priests, entered upon their labor—in the fifteenth year of Tiberias Cæsar, God manifested John to the world. "He came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. As it is written in the book of Esaias, the prophet, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his "paths straight, Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill, shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." Lu. 3; 1-6.

In the first book of the New Testament, it is said, "In those days, came John the Baptist in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. The same John had his raiment of Camels hair and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey." Mat. 3; 1-4. These are the main predictions in reference to the mission of John, and before entering fully into the examination of the important practical details, we deem it necessary to refer to the Scriptures bearing npon the manner, in which he performed the work to which he was called. It is said, "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea and all the region round about Jordan; and were baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins." Mat. 3; 5-6. It is said again, that John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the baptism of repentance. for the remission of sins." Mark 1, 4.

CONDITIONS OF BAPTISM.

It is written, "When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadusees come to his baptism, he said to them, O! generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, think not to say that Abraham is your father—God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. The axe is laid at the root of the trees, therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you, with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I, he

shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. He will gather the wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unqenchable fire." Matt. 3; 6-12. It is said, "There went out to him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins." Mar. 1, 4. In answer to the question as to the evidence of a satisfactory repentance, John said, "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." To the Publicans he answered, "Exact no more than that which is appointed you." To the soldiers he said, "Do violence to no man; neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages." These conditions require no explanation. The multitudes baptized by John alarmed Herod, who sought a very early occasion, to have him imprisoned and soon after, put to death. It is thought he ceased to labor about the close of the year thirty-one, or early in thirty-two.

It will certainly be in place next, to call attention to a few points in order, which will contribute to throw light on the service of John.

The name John, from the Hebrew. indicates, "grace," "favor," or "God-bestowed," and in the church, he has generally borne the honorable title of, "The fore-runner of the Lord." The requirement of the angel Gabriel before his birth, to call him John, clearly implies deep significance; and Zacharias who understood the word, was careful that, he should bear the honorable title, designated by the angel.

JOHN WAS ALSO CALLED THE BAPTIST, *or as the Greek clearly signifies,* THE BAPTIZER, IMMERSER, OR WHATEVER THE WORD IMPORTS.

Justice to the cause of truth, requires that it should be translated, *John—the immerser.* While the prejudice exists that the word, *Baptist,* contributes somewhat, to the support of a denomination called by this name, it is possible, the word will be continued. Men must, however, learn that, there is no Baptist church authorized by the Bible, before they can willingiy adopt the sacred designations of the New Testament.

THE MISSION OF JOHN, WAS NOT TO ESTABLISH A CHURCH OF HIS OWN, OR TO OCCUPY A KIND OF TWI-LIGHT STATE, BETWEEN JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

The old covenant continued till all was fulfilled, and Christ nailed it to the cross, in order to make room for the new. All the law by Moses, was taken away. Even, says Paul, "That which was written and graven on stones—the veritable ten commandments called, the "ministration of death," was done away, to make room for "The ministration of the Spirit," which remains. It is true, all in the old covenant necessary for christians was incorporated in the New—sealed by the blood of Christ, and is binding upon us, not as the law from Sinai, but as the law of the Spirit, of life, by Christ Jesus our Lord.

John, as we have seen, was sent as the forerunner, to herald the coming of the Lord of glory. His business was not to plant a church, or attempt the creation of a sect, but to prepare the way of the Lord. The rough places, he was sent to smooth ; and to straighten the crooked paths of earth, to make ready a people—prepared for the Redeemer. He was to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, the hearts of the children to the fathers, and to "give all the knowledge of salvation to the people, by the remission of their sins?

Did he fulfill his mission? We answer, he did. Perhaps some may say, "If John had given, to the disciples made by him, the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins, none of them, would have been re-baptized, as the twelve at Ephesus. Ac. 19, 5. If John gave not the knowledge by the remission of sins, we maintain, that there is no truth in the plainest statements of the Bible. What, all agree in calling the word of God, says without qualification that, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Mar. 1, 4. Do these words have no meaning? Does the phrase "Baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," mean for remission, or in order to remission of sins." If not, words have no meaning and we can put no confidence in language. Worse still, faith cannot exist, if the words of the Spirit are not adequate to produce confidence in the heart. If it is true that, John gave not the knowledge of salvation to the Jews by the remission of sins, his whole mission was but a deception practised on the people who heard him. But are we told, "If John's preaching and bap-

tism, failed to secure to the twelve at Ephesus, a knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins, they must have failed in every other instance? The conclusion then must be, all that John promised was utterly false, and deceptious, because he was to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Did he do so? He did, and his mission was divine.

In order to understand the subject, under discussion, we must see on very slight examination that John's mission terminated with his death about the close of the year thirty-one, and he had no successors. There was but one who came in the name, or spirit of Elias, but one forerunner, but one to herald the approaeh of Zion's King. Paul did not visit Ephesus before the year fifty-five, and twenty-four years after John's mission closed. He said of his Master, "He must increase, but I must decrease." Jno. 3, 30. The matter then stands thus. John died, as before mentioned, in thirty-one or thirty-two, no one succeeded him, and no one employed his baptism after his death. Some twenty-three to twenty-four years, after the close of John's labors, an eloquent youth of Alexandria named Apollos, visited Ephesus, and preached earnestly, knowing only the baptism of John—and that was only hear-say information, which he received long after the Gospel was preached on Pentecost—and yet without the slightest authority, he preached it to the Ephesians, and the effect was that twelve persons, thought his preaching was sound, and in profound ignorance of the truth, were baptized. When Aquila and Priscilla of Rome, who were then at Ephesus, heard the young man, they took him aside and "expounded unto him the way of the Lord more perfectly." Ac. 18, 26. Soon after, Paul reached Ephesus, and, "Finding certain disciples, he asked them, if they had received the Holy Spirit since they believed? They said, we have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Spirit." These men had not heard John, for he never failed to tell such as he baptized that he, who should come after him, would baptize in the Spirit. Apollos, was quite as ignorant of the Holy Spirit, and of John's preaching, except from vague report, as were the twelve deceived converts. When Paul explained what John preached, that they should believe on Christ Jesus, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Ac. 19, 1-5.

In plain words—they were baptized by Apollos, almost a quarter of a century after John's baptism had ceased to be administered, in the greatest ignorance of the truth, and consequently, their service, though well intended, not being what the Lord re-

quired in his word, had no significance—amounted really, as in the service of Cain, to nothing valuable—was not obedience to God, and consequently, when they come to understand the truth, they obeyed just as if they had not heard the Alexandrian youth. We now insist that we have shown John's mission was positive in its character, that all who heard him, understood his preaching, brought forth the requisite evidence of intelligence and honesty, came to the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins. Hence, we conclude that, no one of John's disciples was ever baptized a second time. Why should it be required? John was sent, "to prepare a people for the Lord." This he did, by inducing the Jews to repent of their apostacy from the law, believe on him to come, and submit to the baptism for the remission of sins. It will be proper to call attention to the fact, that in the preparation of the materials for building the house of God by Solomon, all the preparatory work for the erection of the Spiritual temple under Christ, was fitly represented, foreshadowed, adumbrated and made significant. Hiram, king of Tyre, by contract, furnished large supplies of cedar from Lebanon, and others, made ready stones from other sections, and when the preparations were completed as God had ordered, "the house was built of material made ready before it was brought thither, so that there was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house, while it was in building." 1 Ki. 6, 7.

"The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of heaven is preached and every man presseth into it." Lu. 16, 16. John began his labor by saying to the Jews, "The time is fulfilled; and the kingdom of heaven is at hand." While we see the kingdom was preached from John, we should inquire, how was it preached? As having already come? As actually existing? By no means. John said, it is near, it is coming. There will one come after me more worthy, whose shoes I am not worthy to untie." John was content to prepare materials for this coming edifice, and he did his work effectually. But our Savior said, "Among them born of woman, there hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist, notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he." Mat 11, 11.

We may be asked, if these passages do not involve contradictions? Not, if correctly treated. To be sure, if we say that, John did not live to take a place in the kingdom of heaven, and then

assert that, from the first day John preached the kingdom as coming, the people entered it—pressed into, or become members of it, while it was yet in the future, there must be contradictions. We have no right to make one part of scripture contradict another; and it was utterly impossible for John to have died before the establishment of the kingdom, as our Lord said, and at the same time, all baptized by him were entering, while he died without, and the least within, was greater than he. There are two ways, by which we may get rid of it. If we admit the genuineness of the passage, the manner in which it is rendered cannot be correct, If Luke had intended to say that, from the days of John, men *pressed* into the kingdom, he would have said so; but he wrote his narative years after the establishment of the church, not earlier from all records than the year fifty-eight, or twenty-five years after the building had been reared; and *then* he said, according to the kings version, "every man *presseth* (present tense) into it." But in our view of the matter, we have no occasion to use even this reasoning. All the facts show clearly, as we have seen, that the materials were merely preparing, while John and our Savior were on earth, and for men in this age to so stultify themselves, as to assert, persons passed into a kingdom that had not been established—into which John, the first to prepare materials, could not, and did not enter, is too absurd to be tolerated. There is but little doubt, the last clause of Lu. 16, 16, which reads, "Every man presseth into it," is an interpolation. It is not found in the *Siniatic Codex*, or the Tischendorf manuscript of the New Testament. We consider the evidence sufficiently strong, to justify the reading, "The law and the prophets were till John, since that time the kingdom of God is preached." Lu. 16, 16.

It is urged that, the expression of our version, "the kingdom of God is within you," clearly shows the full establishment of the kingdom, in the days of the Savior on earth. The connection explains this apparent contradiction. The Pharisees, after having heard the truth for years, impertinently asked the Lord, "when the kingdom should come." He answered, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." It was not to rise in their presence, as an ordinary earthly building. He intended to say, "Behold; the kingdom is (*entos*) *among* you." Lu. 11, 21. and yet, they mocked him, by asking for more evidence in regard to the divinity of the Savior's mission. "They had eyes," but they would

not see. We think it must be clear that, John's mission was merely to introduce the Savior, and prepare the way for the establishment of the House of God, and hence, we read that our Lord "Came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on his name." Jno. 1, 11, 12. These were evidently the people prepared by John, called the Lord's "own," and yet, all of them, received him not; but such as did receive the Ssvior, he granted the privilege of forming parts of his family—his house. Not, because they were born of blood however, or were Jews; but because, they were born of God. Because they believed John's preaching and submitted to its requirements—they were thus born of God. Hence, we doubt not, all the disciples, were baptized either by John, or the disciples of Christ who made and baptized more disciples than John." Jno. 4; 1, 2. If other arguments were necessary to show that the kingdom, though near, did not come during the personal ministry of John and Jesus, we might urge the fact that, Jesus was not made king till he ascended to heaven and was crowned by his Father. He was born to be king, as he testified, but never did he exercise regal authority; till God put into his hand the sceptre and said, "Rule thou." Ps. 2 and 24. Neither could he be a priest, while on earth, He. 8, 4, but when he ascended, he was not only crowned King, but the Father constituted him, the High Priest of our profession by an oath." He. 7; 28.

Before discussing the subject of John's labor, it seems necessary to answer the question,

WHY DID HE PREACH TO REPENT AND BELIEVE?

We answer that, they believed the law and the prophets, or at least, professed to do so. They, believed in the God of Israel; but their sins had separated them from God. There was no hope they could be saved, unless they first, as believers in Jehovah, could be induced to repent and return to their Father in heaven. On this condition alone, could they place themselves in position to believe the Gospel, or trust in the Son of God for salvation. Consequently, it would not have been in accordance with their moral condition, to exhort the Apostles to believe in the God of

Israel, or in his Son, till they could change their lives. It was in this view of the matter that, John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. It was in fact a baptism belonging to, or springing from reformation of life, to which they submitted in order to the remission of sins, or that they might become fit materials for the spiritual edifice. All the Jews who received the preaching, "Justified God, by being baptized of John, but the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." Lu. 7; 28, 29.

We trust that, we have shown, the mission of John was intended,

1. To introduce the Messiah to the world.
2. To "Make ready a people prepared for the Lord."
3. He preached a coming Savior and an approaching kingdom.
4. To prepare the Jews for the reception of the Lord, by leading them to the baptism of repentance for the remission of sin.
5. Having fully opened the way for the Savior, he died as a prophet of God of great renown, with the knowledge that, the least in the kingdom, should be greater than he.
6. He was saved, as all servants of God; in obedience to his revealed will, which antedated the Law, that went forth from Zion on Pentecost.
7. We have seen at the close of John's mission, the kingdom he preached, was still in the future.

We propose next to consider,

THE PERSONAL MINISTRY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

We have seen that, John, the great prophet, in the words, "Behold; the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," introduced our Savior to the world. "John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending like a dove, and it abode upon him. He that sent me to baptize," said, "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw, and bear record that, this is the Son of God." He saw the Spirit descend, and heard the Father, say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

After his baptism, our Lord withstood the temptations of Satan, in refusing to accept the temporal rule of the nations, but having

heard that, John was cast into prison, he went into Galilee, and soon after, left Nazareth, and repaired to Capernaum, upon the coast of the sea of Tiberias.

FIRST PREACHING OF OUR LORD.

"From that time, Jesus began to preach," and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Mat. 4, 17. In the matter of our Lord in his first lessons, he differed but little from John, his forerunner. Both, preached a kingdom at hand. Jesus left Capernaum, and, "Went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease, among the people. And his fame went through all Syria; and they brought unto him all sick people that, were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those who were possessed with devils, and those who were lunatic, and those who had the palsy; and he healed them. And great multitudes followed him from Galilee, and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond Jordan." Mat. 4, 23-25. Thus we see that, our Lord enlisted multitudes of disciples from various parts, by the simple proclamation that, the kingdom was at hand. His preaching, was confirmed by miracles—the first of which consisted in converting water into wine, at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. Having won many by his teaching and miracles, the next labor in course, was to instruct the converted

IN THE LESSONS OF CORRECT LIVING.

In the sermon on the mount, when he sat with the disciples, he delivered instructions touching the every day conduct of life, far excelling all the learning of the past. Blessings, were pronounced upon "The poor in Spirit," because they were more pleased with the religion set forth, by the Lord, than with earthly enjoyments; upon "mourners," in Zion; upon the "meek," upon such as, "hungered and thirsted after righteousness; upon the "merciful," "The pure in heart; the peace-makers," and upon the "persecuted for righteousness sake."

HE INDICATED THE HONORED POSITION OF THE SAINTS.

He said to them, "Ye are the salt of the earth," "Ye are the light of the world. A city, set upon a hill cannot be hid. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is heaven."

In this memorable discourse, he fully revealed the obligation of the Lex talionis—the law of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," and substituted the doctrine of rendering "good for evil, and insisted that, by love, by kindness, the world must be saved. He said, "Love your enemies, bless them who curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that dispitefully use you and persecute you." It will be observed that, in preparing the people for the reception of the kingdom, the Savior was most careful to show the moral and spiritual bearings of the new religion. When he had sufficiently indoctrinated his few humble followers, his attention was again directed to the lost.

He sent out the twelve, to preach the coming kingdom, and to teach the simple lessons of submission imparted by the Master. Amongst other things, the disciples, were to "seek first the kingdom of heaven," and to pray, "Thy kingdom come." If the kingdom had come—if it came, as the wise and the good of the past ages, have said, we are not to pray for the kingdom yet to come. We are to sing with the Spirit and understanding, and we are also to pray with the Spirit and with a full undesstanding of the blessings for which we are authorized to ask. "The twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them, not to go into the way of the Gentiles, nor into any city of the Samaritans. But go rather, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As ye go, preach, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

When brought before governors and kings for the name of Jesus, they were directed not to premeditate; for it was not they, but the Spirit that was to speak in them. Said the Master, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me." John a short time before his death, sent to know if he was the "promised Messiah, or do we look for another?" The Savior said, "Go and show John, that the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear, and the dead

are raised, the poor have the Gospel preached unto them, and blessed is he who shall not be offended in me." The logic of such facts, can not be resisted.

THE SECOND COMMISSION—THE SEVENTY SENT OUT.

"After these things, the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two, before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." Their instructions were substantially the same with those of the twelve. They were informed that, the harvest was great and the laborers were few, and were told, "to pray the Lord of the harvest, to send forth laborers." They were also directed, "To heal the sick," and say, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

THE PARABLES TO THE JEWS.

Our Lord submitted to the Jewish nation, seven parables, illustrative of the character of his coming kingdom, the study of any one of which, will richly pay for the labor.

The first, is with reference to the Husbandman who sowed good seed, but some, which fell by the wayside, were eaten by birds; the seeds on stony ground produced not; they amongst thorns. were choked, and none, but the seed on good ground were productive of fruit. The wayside hearers were the indolent and ignorant, who made no effort; the seed amongst rocks represent the hearers, who have no root in themselves; those amongst thorns, are such as permit the cares and pleasures of life to choke the word; and the fruitful soil, is the honest and understanding heart that, brings forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold. The parable of the good and bad seed, differs not essentially from the first.

The third. or resemblance of the kingdom of heaven, to the mustard seed, strikingly illustrates the power of truth when, believed.

The fourth, or the likeness of the kingdom to the leaven, most beautifully illustrates the salutary influence of the christian institution in all hearts and in all time. "A little leaven, leavens the whole lump."

The fifth parable, or the resemblance of the hid treasure, exhiblts, a value in the christian religion, not seen, or appreciated by those without.

The Sixth, or the merchantman illustration, very deeply impresses us with the worth of the "Pearl of great price," found only in the kingdom of God.

The Seventh and last parable, or the illustration of the Net, presents boundless capacity in the church, to save a lost world.

All these parables, however, pointed to the future—to a kingdom and blessings in promise.

THE ROCK ON WHICH THE CHURCH WAS TO BE BUILT.

When Peter in Cesarea Philippi, made the good confession that, "Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God," the Lord pronounced a blessing upon him on account of his good fortune in receiving the revelation from heaven—called him rock, or a stone, and yet said, but, "upon this rock,"—the confession—I will build my church, and the gates of the hidden world shall not overpower it. God had said through the Prophet, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation, and he that, believeth shall not make haste." Isaiah 28, 16. Paul says, "This rock was Christ." 1 Cor. 3, 11 and 10, 4. No one who seriously considers the authority of the word of God, can possibly tolerate the tradition that, Peter, was the rock. God had tried and proved the rock, on which the spiritual edifice was to rest.

No one can read the passage understandingly, without seeing also, that, the church was still in the future. The Lord said, "on this rock, I will build my church," and it will be noted, this was said in the year thirty-two, or two years after the announcement that, the kingdom was at hand; and about one year, before its erection. We have frequently heard it affirmed, by men who were regarded Scholars, that when the Savior, said to Nicodemus, "Except a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." Jno. 3, 5, he gave instruction in reference to a kingdom then existing, and into which all could enter at that time. Great efforts have been made to show our contradictions, in reference to this particular passage. Our friends have said, "If it is necessary to be members of the kingdom, in

order to be delivered to the Father, and the kingdom was not present on the night the words were spoken, Nichodemus and others of that, and of previous ages, must be lost, because, it was impossible for them to become members of a church that did not exist. We would respectfully suggest, that salvation in all ages, has been in obedience to the existing laws and institutions. Furthermore, we think we can clearly see that, no one could ever be saved, by submission to ordinances, which were for the people of a different age. The Jews who honored God, by sacrificing, lambs and kids of the goats, were blessed, and doubtless will attain to rest through their service, but no man in this age, can be saved in this manner. The law had not gone forth, out of Zion, nor the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and consequently, people were not expected anterior to the descent of the Spirit, to understand or obey the Gospel of Christ. But we find a still better manner of solving the apparent difficulty. John the Baptist—Jesus of Nazareth, the twelve and the seventy, anterior to Pentecost. were but preparing materials for the spiritual temple. This preparation, in order to previously qualify persons, for forming the church, is so nearly identical with the process of adoption now, into the body planted first at Jerusalem, that we can scarcely discover the difference. The people were then made ready, to be built into the church, by preaching to them faith in the coming Messiah, repentance from dead works, and baptism for remission. Hence, it was practicable, for Nicodemus and all others, when the Savior was on earth, to "Justify God," by submitting to his appointments, and such as believed in Christ, had the authority to claim places amongst the sons of God. This, was the Lord's arrangement, not ours. We have heard it intimated that, Nicodemus could, on the night of his visit to Jesus, have been born of water, but not of the Spirit, till Pentecost. There is no such a thought as two births—one of water, and at another time, a birth of Spirit, or *vica versa.* The change from the service of the wicked one, to the service of God, whatever the process may have been, was the cause, and condition of the *one new birth* described in the Scriptures. Paul, for instance speaks of persons being saved by the washing of the new creation or regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. This salvation, though wrought in us and for us, through the double agency of water and spirit, is but the one salvation of the soul. The birth from two parents, is but

one, and the birth from above, is through the agency of the water and the spirit. Hence, we conclude the Jews were as satisfactorily renewed in heart and life, through the obedience to the teaching of John and Jesus, while they were pointed to a coming kingdom, as the converts have been at any period after its full establishment. Paul speaks of the new birth, as of persons, "created in Christ Jesus, in order to good works." Eph. 2, 8. The agencies through which this creation, is accomplished, the Apostle did not deem necessary to explain.

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

Rivers of innocent and most precious blood, have been shed, in vain attempts to settle the controversy, as to which religious sect, the keys of the kingdom of heaven belong. The Pope, of course, claims sovereign ownership of the keys; the arch bishops of York and Canterbury, with equal zeal, enter their plea; all Protestant denominations in their respective creeds—claim the right to open and shut the kingdom. The authority and ownership of the keys, are unmistakably involved in the ritualistic discussions of the age. The question is, do Christians—the true servants of the Lord Jesus Christ—possess the birth right, to attend to the service of God's house? If they do, and the liberty, to obey God, implies the use of the keys, they are possessed by all saints, But if the official authority controls, if the body of Christ is ruled by a class, the saints have no possessions in Zion. We regard it not necessary, at present, to enter fully into the denominational controversy regarding the keys, but we deem it important to ascertain what the Scriptures teach. The word keys, is first found in Mat. 16, 16, and literally translated, reads, "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon the earth, shall be bound in the heavens; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon the earth, shalt be loosed in the heavens." The word key, is the symbol of authority, to unlock, or lock—to open, or shut. Hence, the Savior said, "Wo, unto you lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge." Lu. 11, 52, or the power to understand the truth. Jesus said, "I have the keys of death and of hell," Rev. 9, 18, or the grave and the underworld; by which, we understand that, he had the power to open the portals of the grave and of the invisihle state.

To one was given, "The key of the bottomless pit." Rev, 9, 1 and 20, 1. Our Lord said, "Wo, unto you Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven; for ye neither go in, nor suffer them that are entering, to go in." Mat. 23, 13.

From these scriptures, it is plain that, the word key or keys, has reference to power to shut and open. It may be the grave, the invisible world, or the kingdom of God's Son. From the form of the promise, Mat. 16, 19, it appears that, the authority to open the kingdom, was given to Peter alone, and this view seems to be somewhat strengthened by the expression of the Apostle, "God made choice among us, that the Gentiles, by my mouth, should hear the word of the Gospel and believe." Ac. 15, 7. When, however, we examine the words of the Lord, just before he ascended, in addressing his Apostles, "Receive ye, the Holy Spirit, or wait until you are endued with power from on high, then, whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins, ye retain, they are retained," it appears that, all had the right to bind and loose the sins of the people. The plain solution of the matter is, that God had not revealed the terms of salvation under the reign of his Son, and Jesus Christ said to Peter and to the other Apostles that, they should have the honor of revealing the truth to a lost world. They were commanded to, "Tarry at Jerusalem," for the Spirit, and when God spake first through Peter, as "The Spirit gave him utterance," he enabled him to prescribe the terms of remission; and from that day forward till, all things which pertained to life and godliness were given by the Spirit, the Ambssadors of Christ were the "earthen vessels" through which the sins of the people were bound and loosed. When, however, all had been revealed that was essential in the redemption of man, the Lord gave the people to understand that, he had set before the world an open door, and no man could shut it." Rev. 3; 7-8. The Apostles were the depositories of truth, and yet, their only authority consisted in the power, to impart the needed light; for the people to be saved. The door, was opened to the Jews, on Pentecost, and to the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius, and it has not been shut since. Hence, there has been no use for a key, or keys from the conversion of Cornelius. These things being admitted, the idea of keys implying, ruling authority, in the church, has never had the slightest sanction from the word of God. "The Spirit and the bride say come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Men are entitled to no higher ruling authority, in the church than their good character can afford them. The idea of wicked Popes, vile bishops and corrupt priests, ruling the people of God, by vested authority, is simply demoniacal. Purity and love, enable christians to exert influence for God.

THE END OF THE WORLD OR CLOSE OF THE JEWISH DISPENSATON.

The Apostle Paul, speaks of certain persons who were "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated them unto the adoptlon of children, by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph. 1, 45. From a misunderstanding of this passage, the "Westminster divines," inferred that, all the elect were chosen in Christ, from eternity—before the creation of the physical universe, and that, the nnmber was so definite that, it could not be increased or diminished." Should we conclude that one man only, was chosen before creation, we could but infer that the eternal destiny of each, was irrevocably fixed and settled, before, "The morning stars sang together and the sons of God, shouted for joy over the creation," These extreme views, can but be the result of culpable negligence in examining the word of life. We have often seen it published, by even educated men that, the Greek word *Kosmos*—found in this passage, denotes the physical world, or earth, and it alone. It may be employed to express the idea of the creation, of the people in the world, or have reference to the ways of the world. In one passage, it refers to the clothing of the body. Whose (kosmos) adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair." 1 Pe. 3, 3. But we have abundant authority to show that the word, *Kosmos*, as well as *aioon*, means state or dispensation. The Apostle says, "Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." 1 Pet. 1, 20.

He says again, "And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." 2 Pet. 3, 5. In this passage, we find word—(*kosmos*) used once to denote the old or first dispensation, and in the second place, to denote the wicked people. Again, he

says, "The world—(kosmos)—that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." 2 Pet. 3, 6. From these passages, we see world denotes, fashion, age, or dispensation—the people and the earth.

With this understanding, we can have no difficulty in seeing, how the Apostles and others, were chosen before the foundation of the world, and how, they, "obtained redemption through the blood of Christ—the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Having as Paul says, "made known to them the mystery of his will. That in the fullness of time, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ." Eph. 1; 9-10. Thus far, Paul spoke of the Jews, elected before the foundation of the world; but next, he calls special attention to the Gentiles, who were chosen *after* the creation of the new age, or world. He spoke of the Jews as, "first trusting in Christ;" that is, before the foundation of the world, and next, he said of the Gentiles, "In whom ye also trusted, after that, ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation, in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.,' Eph. 1, 13. In this 15th verse, he changes the style of address from the first, to the second person. The plain teaching is that, before the foundation of the christian world, or dispensation, certain Jews chosen to be saints—were constituted fit materials for the spiritual edifice ; but after the erection of the temple, the Gentiles, heard, believed, and were honorably incorporated with Israel, into the new order of things under Christ. The Greek word *Aioon*, which is rendered *age* or *dispensation*, is often employed to designate the Jewish dispensation, or world. Paul says, "But now, once in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," He. 9, 26. In the end of the Jewish world, the Savior came, with the announcement that, the end drew near, and the kingdom of heaven was at hand. He said to the Jews, "The harvest, is the end of the world," at which the Son of Man, was to send his messengers to gather out of his kingdom, all who did iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, with wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then, shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father." Mat. 13, 59-43.

The disciples asked the Savior, on the mount of Olives, in reference, "To the sign of his coming and of the end of the world." Mat. 24, 3. The Lord gave the signs of his coming, *in power;*

but specified neither the day nor the hour of the end. He assured his disciples that, "No man knew the day, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only." Mark 13, 32. He. however, informed them that, at the end, "Two should be in the field, the one taken, and the other left. Two grinding at the mill, the one taken and the other left." He stated, "This generation (not this race as some have supposed) shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Mat. 24, 34. All these references, are to the close of the Jewish age.

Our Lord, finally said, "There be some standing here, who shall not taste of death, till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom," Mat. 16, 28. The Apostles of the Redeemer, had all suffered martydom before the year seventy; except possibly, "the beloved disciple, John," who had undergone the mode of an execution, by being cast into a caldron of boiling oil, from which he was said to have escaped unhurt. John, it is thought, was miraculously preserved in order to verify the prediction; and hence, in his writing after the year seventy, and after the end of the world, we are considering, he refered to none of the signs mentioned by Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus promised to be with his disciples, in a miraculous manner to the end of the world. Mat. 28, 20. The miracles continued till the revelations were completed; the disciples came to the *unity* of the faith and the body of Christ, became self-supporting, when they ceased.

While it is said, our Lord, "Blotted out the hand writing of ordinances, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Col. 1, 14, we should not conclude, the end had quite come at the Savior's death. After his resurrection, indeed, he said to his servants, "Repentance and remission of sins, shall be preached in all the world, in his (my) name, beginning at Jerusalem." Lu. 24, 47. After he had risen, he commanded that his disciples should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which said he, ye have heard of me." We have almost reached the end; for the Lord said, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence." Ac. 1; 4, 5. We are now sufficiently, near the end of the old world, and the opening of the new age, to assure our hearts, our researches so far, have not been in vain. We hope to make still nearer approaches to the Temple in our next issue.

AN EARNEST LIFE.

Some weeks ago, I was in Nashville, and attended the funeral of an old man, I have known the most of my life. I had always seen him at meeting, and it hardly seemed like meeting, unless he was there. Something important had to occur, before he could be kept from his accustomed seat, on Lord's days. He always sat about the same place. I knew where to look for him, and if I was disposed to be inattentive, I should have expected a serious glance from his reverent face, sooner than from any other. Sitting near him, I would not have whispered for anything. I feared his earnest look. When I grew up and became a member of the same church, I learned his real goodness of heart. He felt deep anxiety for all the young members, and sometimes gave them gentle, affectionate admonitions that were not forgotten. If he could have done so, he would himself taken them all to Christ, for fear they would not go—for fear they would wander out of the strait and narrow way. His wife was a quiet woman, sensible and unassuming, in all things sincere, and her sister was my best friend. I esteemed it a privilege to visit them. I knew their professions of friendship were earnest, and when weary of being among strangers and exhausted in body and mind by the labor of School, their house was a place of rest. There was quiet and freedom from all excitement, that was very pleasant to one, living in the busy world of a large Academy. I remember the prayers of this christian man at the sunrise meetings, on Lord's days. Their sincerity and deep humility prepared one for spending the later hours of worship, more profitably. Others with him, were in the habit of assembling in the early morning, and raising on bended knee, their hearts and voices to the Father above. Most of them have "crossed the flood," but are not forgotten. Their deeds of christian love live in the hearts of many, and their names are still breathed tenderly.

The funeral discourse over the remains of Bro. Eichbaum, was by his friend, (who has spent most of his three score and ten years in the service of his God and his fellow men.) Nearly fifty years ago, he buried him with the Lord in baptism, and he could well tell what an earnest life he led after submitting to the Savior. Diligent in every good word and work, he went about doing good, extreme old age enfeebled his mind and body, and took from him the memory of earthly things. But he remembered the Savior

as the only hope of a dying world. He asked nothing of the spirits of dead men or women, but clung with unfaltering trust—with child like love to the cross of calvary.

What a blessing for the pure and the good to leave their frail and suffering bodies to be ever with the Lord. There is comfort in the thought that when the spirit can no more assist the body to be useful, it can obey the summons of the pale messenger—can leave the "sleeping body with its God to rest," and pass from earth. Our brother, in his feebleness, gathered the "drapery of his couch about him," and laid down to quiet sleep, with the hope of waking in a glorious world, where there is no more sin or suffering—no more hearts full of sorrow—where all is peace, and joy reigns forevermore.

C. F.

THE CHURCH.

BY JACOB CREATH, PALMYRA, MISSOURI.

Most of the evils, which affect christendom, arise from perversions of the meaning of the word, church. The great and capital error of Romanists and sects, generally, consists in substituting, their hierarchies for the church of Jesus Christ. Another error, possibly not less destructive, is the substituting the Old Testament for the New Testament. I have never been able to understand, how an old, and new covenant, could be one and the same covenant. How two things, as different as Judaism and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, could be one and the same. To call two things which are opposite in their nature, one and the same thing, involves a mathematical absurdity; and shocks all common sense. We had as well try to convince a child that an old hat, or old dress is a new one. This, in the very nature of things, is impossible. Yet it seems from all our discussions with the current denominations that, they do not understand the difference between a first and second covenant—a better, and worse covenant, a new and old covenant. They could just as easily prove that, Moses and our Savior were the same person.

The Jewish law giver, Moses, instituted what Paul called, "divers washings," which were not intended to he perpetual, but

were imposed by Moses on the Jews, "until the time of the Reformation by the Messiah," as all the other ceremonies of that religion were, not even excepting circumcision.

The best way of considering this subject, is to inquire into the precise period in which Moses was to be heard, in the character of a Legislator. This question receives an answer from Moses himself. He said, to the Jews of his time, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren." Deu. 18, 15-18. The Jews of our Savior's day and the Apostle Peter; applied this passage to the Messiah. Jno. 1, 21, Acts 3, 22, 23. This point was fully and finally settled in the assembly of Apostles, elders and brethren at Jerusalem. It was decided that, there was no authority to keep the Mosaic law of ordinances. Ac. 15, 5-25. In the mouths of three witnesses, this matter is forever settled, with all persons who have any regard for the word of God. Before any christian, therefore, can be bound to obey precepts of the law instituted by Moses, it must be shown that Jesus Christ, re-ordained them, in his law as found in the New Testament and sealed them with his blood.

Jewish ceremonies are now to be considered only as histories of past ages, but not as laws of the present time, binding on christians. In the Acts of the Apostles, the first nine times, where the word church occurs, it is applied by the Holy Spirit, to the first, the oldest, the model and mother church in the city of Jerusalem. In acts 5, 10, it is defined by John Wesley, in his notes on the New Testament, as "The first New Testament church," as "a company of men called by the Gospel, grafted into Christ by baptism, animated by love, united by all the ties of fellowship and disciplined by the death of Ananias and Sapphira." This, was done in the year thirty-three, in the city of Jerusalem in Judea. All the Apostolical churches were formed after this model. "See," said God to Moses, "that you make all things according to the pattern shown in the mount." The dimensions and plans of the Ark, the Tabernacle, the Temple and the church of Jesus Christ, were given by the Spirit of God. According to the testimony of Protestant writers, the Romish hierarchy, was set up in the year 606, which is nearly six hundred years after the church of Jesus Christ was set up. History testifies that Protestantism began April the 19th, 1529, nearly 1300 years too late to be the church of Jesus Christ.

In a future number, we may give the ages of each Protestant

sect, or church. The ages of Romanism and seetarianism, preclude them forever, from being the church of Jesus Christ. There are but two mother churches—Jerusalem and Rome—the Old and the New church. The history of the first, is in the book of the Acts of Apostles; but the history of the second, is in the book of Revelations, chapter 17th, as the mother of abominations and sects.

BE ENERGETIC.

THERE is no telling what a boy may make of himself, if his aims are high, his principles noble, and he determines to be respected.

Poor boys have made some of the best men of the world. In the cold breezes of poverty, there is a bracing power that, gives health and capacity for exertion. Poverty keeps a hard school, but often times a good one. She is in the old fashioned habit of flogging her pupils severely, but when they leave her, they know their lessons—are acquainted with her whole course and their capabilities for usefulness are well developed, by her stern teaching. If, to this is added, the example of a good mother, they are far more apt to become distinguished, than those nursed on the lap of wealth. I was some days ago, reading the life of Sir Charles Bell, whose mother was left a widow, with four boys. From childhood, he witnessed her struggles to keep her children with her, that she might do all in her power, to render them noble, high-minded men. Charles was a small boy, when his father died. He watched the weary lines on the face of the mother he loved so well, and says of her, "For twenty years of my life, I had but one wish, it was to gratify her, and do something to lessen her cares. A boy so devoted, could not fail to make a noble man. Besides this, he cultivated the tenderest affection for his brothers, and their poverty was reudered beautiful, by their love to each other. From the poor boy, Charles grew up one of the great men of Europe—honored by kings and nobles—making discoveries that have rendered his name famous. Not satisfied, merely, to gain knowledge, he increased the knowledge of the world, and also became one its first surgeons. Patients went to him from all parts of Europe, and his life was spent in relieving misery.

He died in the spring of Forty-two lamented by all. A good writer says, "A purer, gentler and truer spirit never passed away. This is the story of one who kept his affections young—his love of the pure and refined, unsullied, while bravely fighting the battle of life. His heart was as tender as his intellect was vigorous, and while gaining a high place in the world, he turned to his home and friends for the solace and comfort of his life." This is said of a boy who suffered the evils of poverty and knew how to pity the poor and suffering. It is an example of what one may do, by untiring energy, the cultivation of pure and noble principles—by being upright in every transaction of life. The four brothers were respected for their talents and goodness, and to their widowed mother be the honor. Charles the youngest was the most widely known and will not be forgotten. If there were more mothers like his, would there not be more highminded, noble men in our world? This account of Sir Charles Bell is given for all the poor boys, who wish to improve their condition by honest, labor and are anxious to be useful in their day and generation. He commenced as poor as any of you, and before he died, he lived in the hearts of thousands. He became a fine scholar and for one treatise on the "Human Hand," he received nearly five thousand dollars. His reverence for God was shown in all his conduct through life, and where he was best known, he was most devotedly loved. No doubt his widowed mother had his grateful thanks for the pure influence she exerted over him. All boys who wish to be distinguished, may, by following the example of Charles Bell, attain positions that will render them the pride of their friends and a blessing to their country.

C. F.

PRAYER.

CHRISTIANS are exhorted to cultivate a spirit of prayer and supplication, at all times. Continue instant in prayer, "Pray without ceasing." Paul says, "I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands." In order to obey this injunction, we must watch our hearts, lips and lives, and be so engaged in business or pleasure, that we can look up to our Father and ask his blessing. For want of this watchfulness, we sin in word and deed, and deep

sorrow takes the place of the happiness we might enjoy. We cannot come boldly to the throne of grace, from the consciousness of duty unperformed, but often remorse and repentance fill the heart, instead of gratitude and love. There are many things to prevent the attainment of an affectionate and childlike spirit in prayer. An excess of worldly cares, frivolous or indolent habits, the reading of books that inspire lightness, rather than devotional feelings. too great an effort to appear well in the world—in a word, all that makes us engage in prayer as a duty, rather than as a pleasure or comfort. Not only should christians have their seasons of communion with God, but the heart should incline, at all times, to call upon him. Temptations to speak and act in an unchristian manner, come to all. Disappointments occur, that are very hard to bear. Deep sorrow springs up, where we look for the sweetest happiness. What the next day or hour will bring, no one knows, and nothing so well prepares the mind for the surprises and perplexities of life, as the habit of coming constantly to our Father, and pouring out all our sorrows before him. We have but little enjoyment and but little good influence without it. If we wish to lead our friends to Christ, we must study humbly and prayfully the best means of doing so. A prayerless christian is not apt to "turn many to righteousness." We have reason to be grateful that this means of improvement is at our command, every hour of the day, and that by prayer, we may not only soften our own hearts and render them more pure, but may lead others to do the same. I have somewhere seen it mentioned, that, in St. Peter's Church, at Rome, there is a door, that is opened, with great pomp, on Christmas Eve, once in twenty-five years. The Pope and Cardinals approach it in state. Some ceremonies are gone through and when it turns on its hinges, they enter, and followed by a great crowd, march slowly to the Altar. Suppose it were the case with us, that we could approach our altar—our mercy seat—the Savior, only once in a quarter af a century. How anxious we would be for the time to come. When conscious of guilt, how we would shrink from the thought of death, before we could ask his pity and forgiveness. As the period drew near, we would count the months, weeks, days and hours, that were still to elapse, before we could be permitted to offer our prayers and supplications.. Our anxiety to live would be most intense, that we might confess all our wrongs, and be able to claim the promise. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins

and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Now, when God calls us to come at any time, we often neglect his call. He is willing to grant what his children need, and how humbly and constantly they should come, that he may be near them—may dwell with them. Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." How wondrous, to think of the Majesty of Heaven, coming to his frail creatures, and dwelling with them because they love him.

Now, we have the privilege of daily and hourly prayer. In sorrow and in joy, we may expect his blessing if we ask according to his will. We should, like David, "meditate upon him in the night watches," and our thanks should arise, after "we have laid us down and slept." "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning. In the morning, will I direct my prayer to thee and look up." "Evening, noon and morning will I pray." If we are so inclined, we can find our Father in the busy throng of the crowded city—on the mountain side, or in the forest dell. We can look to him in the wild roar of the tempest, or when the bloom and beauty of earth make our hearts glad. He will give ear to our prayer, and not hide himself from our supplication.

C. F.

PRAISE TO GOD.

Why is it that we forget to praise God? We ask him for what we need, and neglect to thank and praise him for the blessings he bestows. He gives earthly and spiritual comfort for which constant gratitude is due, but we are like those whom the Savior freed from disease. Ten were cleansed, but only one "returned to give glory to God,"—only one thanked and praised him for his love and pity. He has told us to ask for what we need, and when his constant mercies fall into our lives, it is our duty, to express our gratitude for them. God's ancient people delighted in his praise. Their gratitude found utterance in melody.

When delivered from their enemies they shouted, "Sing unto the Lord for he hath triumphed gloriously—the horse and the rider hath he cast into the sea." Moses, even when preparing for

his lonely death on the mount, taught to the people a song of gratitude. Although the sweet singer of Israel had many sorrows, his heart ever rose up in praise to him who had loaded him with benefits. He often bursts forth into strains sublime and beautiful. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord—to sing praise unto thy name, O, most High." He exhorts the "whole world to make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms."

We can see the Israelites pressing into the Temple and singing, "I was glad when they said to me, Let us go up to the house of the Lord." Isaiah and other old prophets praised God in strains grand and heart stirring. Their souls were filled and elevated by their theme and they never praised him in words, when their hearts were far off—never "mocked God with a solemn sound upon thoughtless lips." If praise and thanksgiving were so frequent in the pale light of the old dispensation, should they not, with prayer, form the vital breath of christians? Should not the children of the day constantly magnify and bless their Father in heaven. Paul and Silas did so, at midnight, in the chains and darkness of a prison. Christians are commanded to praise in "Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs." Devotion should not consist in prayer alone. We should not only pray, but should pour out our thanks for answers to prayer. We will not always pray, but will always praise. Angels praise God. The spirits of the just made perfect praise. John says, "I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Allelulia, Salvation and glory, honor and power unto the Lord our God. Allelulia the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." If christians praise him with their whole hearts they will never want cause for praise. They should say with one of old; "While I live I will praise God, I will sing praises to him while I have my being."

C. F.

RISE EARLY.

Rise up, young christian, in the early morning, and thank God for his protection through the night—for the rest and comfort you have enjoyed. You have laid you down and slept, you have awaked because the Lord sustained you." How hallowed is the

hour of morn—meet, aye beautifully meet, for the pure prayer. You have cause, "to raise the heart and bend the knee," to him whose watchful love has been over you in your defenceless hours. Rise up and thank him, before the cares, trials or pleasures of earth fill your minds.

Look to him with the earnestness of a child. Ask him for help to do right through the day just dawning upon the world. Thank him for his mercies and ask that his blessings may still attend you. Read a short portion of Scripture for comfort and reflection that your thoughts may not be unprofitable. Thus commenced, the hours will be peaceful and pleasant. You will feel nearer to God, and your desires to live at his feet, will be stronger. If sorrows come, you can bear them patiently. Should happiness brighten your pathway; gratitude to the Giver of all joy, will fill your heart with peace that passes not. While you are healthy, do not spend the morning hours in sleep. Remember they are most precious—given to the young for their own improvement—for doing good to others—for preparing for the great eternal morning that may soon break upon your vision. If there were nothing else, the beauty and freshness, of the dawning day, should call you from your slumbers. The sun pouring out his radiance, makes earth pleasant as a "bright eyed smiling face." Get up. Look upon its beauty and bless the Lord,

C. F.

SPEAK GENTLY.

An earnest writer says, "Anxious mother, in patience possess your soul, and thus be enabled to lead your little ones to the cross." Turbulent temper and self-will may be subdued by a mother's calm and patient spirit. An aged man once rebuked a young mother, for speaking loudly and impatiently to her boy. He said, "In our family there are five boys. My father was a farmer, and rough, but my mother was a christian lady. I never, in my life; heard her utter a loud, angry word. Her gentle, loving tones, her untiring patience completely curbed my father's roughness and controlled the strong passions of our boyhood. We almost worshipped that gentle being, and when God called her home, the

sunlight went from our dwelling. Four of her boys drank of her spirit, and became earnest preachers of the Gospel of Christ. I still hear the gentle tones of her sweet voice, and my heart is grieved when I hear a mother speak harsh to her child."

PATIENCE.

"THERE is true grandeur in patience," says an English lady writing in an old journal. Heaven's discipline is long continued, because his children are wayward. He who has gone to prepare a place for them, must also prepare a people for the eternal city, and the road of preparation, is the same he traveled over. Patience is an element most essential, to christian character. He who does what he can to avert calamity, and when it comes, casts his burden on the Lord, rises above the world, and shows how beautiful is the religion he professes. Christian patience goes hand in hand with confidence. It is when the soul rests upon God, and makes the promises its own, that patience is seen in her shining garments. Patience is the child of faith, and walks leaning upon her arm. They say to those who love them,

Pejoice though storms assail thee,
Rejoice when skies are bright,
Rejoice though round thy pathway,
Is spread the gloom of night.

C. F.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

IN answer to oft repeated invitations to the friends of the Christian religion, to aid us in conducting the Religious Historian, we have received many valuable letters and essays, which have not appeared in our columns; and we consider due to the writers and others to offer satisfactory reasons for our course. In the first place, the Religious Historian, is not a newspaper. It is not a miscellaneous publication, in which the reader is to look for all kinds of advertisements, or notices of current events, good or bad.

In the second place, we have signified a definite purpose, in the

course of the publication. We have proposed an elementary examination of the Christian institution, with the view so soon as we can prepare the way, to give such a Historical relation of the Church of God as may be in our power. Should we, with these purposes, fully expressed, turn aside to the publication of miscellaneous matters, and especially, to personal allusions and local questions, the effect would be to disappoint the expectation of our friends, and accomplish nothing more than what may be found in contemporary papers. Oft times writers of fine ability are so fond of personal references, and the expression of peculiar views that, it is difficult to extract even short items from them, in full keeping with the main purposes of our publication. Having thus, fully intimated matters of a negative character, which operated unfavorably, it may be well to say, in what directions our friends can assist us.

They can essentially aid us, by suggestions as to the best manner of treating all questions, and in giving reasons for introducing any and all matters, which might occur to them as most valuable. They could perform good service, by rigidly criticising whatever might appear to them unsound. We feel very confident that, should we be permitted to examine what is generally termed, the Organization of the Church, we shall be forced to occupy ground on many questions, quite averse to current opinions, and to practices which are dearly loved, even by brethren, for whom we have great respect. Our desire is to look at all matters in the light of the Bible, and in this work, we are confident, our brethren, especially, might render us very great assistance. We would be pleased to have help by the examination of various New Testament questions which will necessarily come under revision.

Essays on various subjects, might be of material service to us, and of immense value to the world. While we cannot promise, in advance to publish all that may be written, we may be able to give our readers the whole of some—parts of others, and all essays received, may be valuable in aiding us to arrive at proper conclusions. We wish, for instance, to examine

The faith revealed in the New Testament.

The Repentance, in all its bearings.

The subject of Baptism, as to its, action, subject and design.

The Confession, and obedience from the heart in order to salvation.

The New birth, or new creation in Christ Jesus the Savior.

The Regeneration.

The whole subject of work in or through the church in all its divisions—embracing the labor of every member of the body from the highest to the lowest.

Treatises on any point, connected with the subjects we are considering, could scarcely fail to prove valuable to us and the causeof truth. Should our friends, however, write, we must be the judge of what shall be published.

THE CHRISTIAN PUBLICATION HOUSE IN CONTEMPLATION.

In the American States South, during the past twelve years, there has evidently been marked reluctance to engaging in any co-operative Christian work. We, are, however, thankful, to learn that, amongst our most thoughtful and earnest brethren, there is an anxious disposition to establish in the City of Nashville, a Christian Publication House. The purpose contemplated, is the Publication of such Books, Journals, Tracts, and Papers, as may be considered necessary in promoting the cause of Christ. The first question, is, do we have the means? Certainly—we have—both the money and the people for such an enterprise. A thousand persons, we think, can be found, who will donate one hundred dollars each, and this amount, will be ample for putting the work into operation. We have the confidence that a hundred can be found, who would most cheerfully furnish One Thousand Dollars each for the enterprise. We very much need not only a Publishing House, in the South, but also a Church Library, for the benefit of students of the Bible. At present, we merely call attention to the subject, and should the friends of Christianity, respond favorably, plans will be submitted, and steps taken for accomplishing the purposes suggested.

READING THE WORD OF LIFE.

The Savior said, "You read the Scriptures, because in them, you think you have eternal life, but they are they, which testify of me." "And you will not come to me that you may have life."

"The Father who sent me, hath borne witness of me. Have you never heard his voice at any time, nor seen his form? You have not his word in you; because whom he has sent, him you believe not." Jno. 5; 37-40.